

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 60

By Bailey

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Lehman Riggs of Cookeville upon the occasion of his 101<sup>st</sup> birthday.

WHEREAS, it is our distinct honor to recognize and commend a member of America's greatest generation, a Tennessee Volunteer of the highest order whose untold sacrifices for this country during World War II have afforded us the freedom we hold so dear; and

WHEREAS, Lehman Riggs of Cookeville celebrated his 101<sup>st</sup> birthday on January 17, 2021; at 101 years young, he is one of the oldest living WWII veterans in Putnam County; and

WHEREAS, in early 1944, Mr. Riggs was deferred from military service due to his employment in war production; however, he felt a call to do more and so volunteered to serve as a replacement soldier, knowing that he might be called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice; and

WHEREAS, after completing basic training, Lehman Riggs was shipped directly overseas and assigned to the U.S. Army's 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division; an expert marksman, he served bravely in the Battle of the Bulge as a machine gunner and was quickly promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant; and

WHEREAS, during this horrific battle, Staff Sergeant Riggs was crossing an open field when he encountered mortar fire from the enemy; seeking cover, he dove into a foxhole, severely injuring his knee in the process; and

WHEREAS, due to the large number of Allied casualties at the time, Mr. Riggs was not evacuated for medical treatment but instead continued to serve in combat until the war ended; and

WHEREAS, Lehman Riggs received the gratitude of a nation when a photograph of him in combat was featured in the May 14, 1945, issue of *Life* magazine; and

WHEREAS, after being discharged from the Army, Mr. Riggs began his career with the U.S. Postal Service, retiring after thirty years of service and ultimately moving to Cookeville; and

WHEREAS, Lehman Riggs is one of this State's most treasured citizens, a true hero whose selfless service to his country will continue to inspire subsequent generations; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Lehman Riggs on the occasion of his 101<sup>st</sup> birthday, saluting his valiant military service in the European theater and extending to him our best wishes for many happy returns of the day.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.